

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-6. (*cancelled*)

7. (*currently amended*)

A melting apparatus for melting pieces of solid metal in a bath of molten metal, the melting apparatus comprising:

a device having a lower portion, an upper portion, and a body portion extending therebetween which is formed with a plurality of apertures therein, the device arranged, in use, with the lower portion and the plurality of apertures in the body portion positioned within the bath of molten metal and the upper portion positioned above the upper surface of the molten metal bath;

10 introduction means for introducing the solid metal into the device through the upper portion of the device;

flow inducing means for inducing flow of molten metal through the device, comprising an impellor positioned within the bath of molten metal; and

15 flow straightening means for encouraging axial flow of ~~molten~~ metal through the device, positioned within the device below the plurality of apertures.

8. (*cancelled*)

9. (*previously presented*)

A melting apparatus as claimed in claim 7 wherein the flow straightening means comprises a plurality of baffles arranged in at least one grid.

10. *(original)*

A melting apparatus as claimed in claim 9 wherein a first grid is located above the flow inducing means and a second grid is located below the flow inducing means.

11. *(previously presented)*

A melting apparatus as claimed in claim 7 further comprising flow rate varying means for varying the flow rate of molten metal through the device.

12. *(original)*

A melting apparatus as claimed in claim 11 wherein the flow rate varying means comprises a variable speed drive for the flow inducing means.

13. *(currently amended)*

A melting apparatus as claimed in claim 8 7, further comprising support means for supporting pieces of solid metal in the device during melting.

14. *(currently amended)*

A melting apparatus as claimed in claim 8 7, further comprising flow diversion means for directing molten metal exiting the body through the apertures away from the upper surface of the molten metal bath.

15. *(original)*

A melting apparatus as claimed in claim 14 wherein the flow diversion means comprises a collar or skirt which projects from the body from a level above the apertures.

16. *(original)*

A melting apparatus as claimed in claim 15 wherein the collar/skirt surrounds the device and projects outwardly and downwardly from the body.

17. *(cancelled)*